

CLAIM OF JAMES B. WALTON.

LETTER

FROM

THE SECRETARY OF STATE,

IN REFERENCE TO

The claim of Mr. Walton, as a messenger to the government of Texas.

JULY 20, 1856.—Referred to the Committee of Ways and Means.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE,

Washington, July 9, 1856.

SIR: I transmit a copy of a letter of the 5th instant, addressed to this department by William L. Hodge, esq., upon the subject of a claim of Mr. James B. Walton, of Louisiana, to five hundred dollars as compensation for his services as a messenger to the government of Texas, upon the passage by Congress of the Texas indemnity bill in 1850. Having no reason to doubt the correctness of the representations contained in the letter of Mr. Hodge, and believing that the claim of Mr. Walton is a fair one, it is recommended that an appropriation for its payment be made.

I have the honor to be, sir, your obedient servant,

W. L. MARCY.

Hon. N. P. BANKS, Jr.,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

WASHINGTON, *July 5, 1856.*

SIR: So soon as the Texas indemnity bill (one of the compromise measures of 1850) was passed, Mr. Webster, then Secretary of State, sent a telegraphic despatch to Mr. Peters, then collector of New Orleans, directing him at once to despatch a confidential messenger with the information to Austin, where the legislature was then in session. Mr. James B. Walton was selected for the purpose, under a special agreement that he should be allowed his expenses and a compensation of \$500. Mr. Walton had intended to leave New Orleans the following day for the sea-shore on account of his health, which had suffered, but he with some reluctance accepted the mission, and

departed for Galveston, at a very short notice, by a steamer that left the same day. He accomplished the journey with great promptness, and executed his mission in the most satisfactory manner; but on his return only received his personal expenses, but no portion of the \$500. The application for the latter was made at Washington, but the reason assigned for the non-payment was, that there was no fund from which it could be drawn. The case was brought to the notice of President Fillmore, and both of your immediate predecessors, Messrs. Webster and Everett, all of whom agreed that it ought to be paid; but the above difficulty still presented itself. At both of the last sessions of Congress I had urged that it should be included in the estimates for the department; and having recently received a letter from Mr. Walton on the subject, I take the liberty of bringing it to your notice, as that gentleman is an old friend of mine, and his present circumstances render it very desirable at this time to obtain this sum which has been so long and so justly due to him. It is the more hard upon him, as he on the trip incurred expenses to the amount of \$130, which were not included in the statement he rendered, and therefore is actually that amount out of pocket.

All the circumstances detailed above are within my own personal knowledge, as I was in New Orleans at the time; and when Mr. Peters received the despatch, he consulted with me as to a suitable messenger, and I suggested Mr. Walton, and Mr. Peters subsequently stated to me the terms of the arrangement with Mr. Walton.

Mr. Hunter, of your department, is familiar with the case, and I beg to refer you to him for any information you may wish to obtain respecting it.

I respectfully urge it upon your attention, and if there is at present no fund from which the amount can be paid, that you will be pleased to ask for an appropriation for the purpose.

The correspondence with Mr. Peters, I presume, is on file in the department.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,

WM. L. HODGE.

Hon. WM. L. MARCY,
Secretary of State.